

ILLINOIS

An Address delivered before
the Faculty and Students of
the University of Illinois on
ILLINOIS DAY, 1911.

by CLARK E. CARR



Urbana-Champaign, December 6.

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The address was delivered in the great auditorium of the University which was filled.

Doctor Evarts B. Greene, dean of the University, called the assembly to order and presented as its presiding officer Honorable Oliver A. Harker, dean of the law department, an intimate acquaintance and friend of the orator of the day.

Judge Harker, in introducing the speaker happily referred to his honorable public service, both at home and abroad, and to the books of which he is the author, to his valuable contributions to history, to his service as president of the Illinois State Historical Society, and to the esteem in which he is held throughout our great state.

THE ADDRESS IN FULL:

Colonel Carr spoke as follows:

Significance of the Name Illinois.

"L-etymologie de ce mot Illinois vient, selon ce qui nous avons dit, du terme Illini qui dans langue de cette Nation signifie un homme fait ou achevé, de même qui ce mot Alleman veut dire tout homme; comme si on vouloit signifier par là qu'un Alleman tient du couer & de la bravoure de tous les hommes de quelque Nation qu'ils soient."

Pere Hennepin, "Decouverte d'un pays plus grand que l'Europe."

I give here the etymology and definition of the name of our state as given by Father Hennepin, in his own language.

The following is a somewhat free translation of Father Hennepin's statement:

"The etymology of the word 'Illinois' comes, as we have said, from the term 'Illini,' which, in the language of that nation (Indian) signifies a man finished or complete, the same as the word 'Alleman' expresses full man, as if they wished to signify by this that a German is imbued with the spirit, fortitude, and heroism of all the men of

every race that has existed, or can exist."—From Father Hennepin's "Discovery of a Country Greater Than Europe."

This work of Father Hennepin gives an account of his expedition with LaSalle through the Territory of Illinois, in 1679 and 1680.

Illinois, at First, Part of Florida.

The first European nation to claim title to the vast region, of which Illinois is a part, was Spain. Spaniards, under the leadership of Ferdinand de Soto, who discovered Florida and, finally, the Mississippi River, claimed, as a part of Florida, all the region drained by the Mighty Father of Waters and its tributaries. This was in 1541, when the Spanish claim was conceded. So it appears, that Illinois was first under the dominion of Spain. But the Spaniards did not then, and never have occupied the Illinois Territory.

James Marquette.

In 1673, James Marquette, a French Priest, with five of his countrymen, reached the Mississippi near its source, which they descended for a long distance, and, in returning, ascended the Illinois River. They were, probably, the first white persons who traversed Illinois.

The fame of Marquette induced others to follow, among whom, in 1678, was Chevalier de LaSalle with a party of Frenchmen, among whom was Father Hennepin. Others, of their countrymen, followed, and Illinois was occupied, to a great degree, by the French, and was practically held by them until through the conquest of Quebec, by Wolfe, in 1759, it became subject to Great Britain.

The County of Illinois.

The territory of Illinois was, immediately after independence had been achieved, conceded to belong to Virginia, and Virginia, by an act of her legislature passed on December 9th, 1778, proceeded to organize it into a

county—the county of Illinois. Illinois existed as such county until January, 1782, about four years when, —by the failure of the Virginia Legislature to act the county of Illinois ceased to exist.

During her existence as a county, Illinois was in a state of lawlessness, such as had never before been known, until, finally, the country was in a state of anarchy, which prevailed until Government in 1790, under the ordinance of 1787, was inaugurated.

It is generally understood, that all the territory comprising Illinois belonged to Virginia. This is true of a large portion of our Illinois territory but not of all.

At the closing of the Revolutionary War, those states of the union having no claims upon western lands, beyond such as had been occupied by settlers, declared that the western lands should belong—not to any individual state, but to the United States, as a whole. Upon this proposition, Maryland was the most pronounced, she going so far as to refuse, so long as those claims were urged and until they were surrendered, to ratify the Articles of Confederation, which was necessary to put a government in motion.

The result was, that Congress, on September 6, 1780, requested the surrender of, and cession to the United States, of those lands. New York was the first state to cede her western lands to the United States. She was followed by Virginia, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

These claims, of those individual states, were made under the theory that each colony or state, as it emerged from under the rule of Great Britain, owned all the lands west of it, so far as the jurisdiction of the Mother country had extended.

Patrick Henry the Father of Illinois.

Virginia had stronger claim to the Illinois country than any other state, because an expedition sent out by her governor, Patrick Henry, under General George Rogers Clark, in 1778, during the Revolutionary war, had conquered the country and wrested it from the British. The great Patrick Henry took extraordinary interest in the expedition of Clark, which he, himself, sent out, and he may not inappropriately be called The Father of Illinois.

For her territory Illinois is, there-

fore, indebted to Virginia for much the greater portion, but she is also indebted to Connecticut and Massachusetts for a considerable portion.

The Ordinance of 1787.

This Western Territory was ceded to the United States, and the general government passed an ordinance known as the ordinance of 1787, under which the vast region was organized into states. Article 5 of the ordinance provided for the formation out of the territory north west of the Ohio, of not less than three nor more than five states.

The Northern Boundary of Illinois.

By the Ordinance of 1787, the northern boundary of Illinois was to have been on a line drawn from east to west, touching the most southerly point, or bend, of Lake Michigan. This line would have been about sixty-one miles south of the northern boundary of Illinois, as finally established. The northern boundary would have been latitude forty-one degrees and thirty-seven minutes, instead of at forty-two degrees and thirty minutes, where it is. The counties of Joe Davis, Stephenson, Winnebago, Boone, McHenry, Lake, Carroll, Whiteside, Lee, Ogle, DeKalb, Kane, Dupage and Cook including Chicago with all its vast trade, would have been in Wisconsin.

Nathaniel Pope.

Judge Nathaniel Pope was the delegate of the territory of Illinois in Congress.

In December, 1817, the territorial Legislature of Illinois prepared a memorial to Congress, praying for leave to form a state government, in this territory, which memorial was sent to Judge Pope, the territorial delegate in Congress. On Judge Pope's motion, a bill was introduced in accordance with the memorial sent by the Territorial Legislature of Illinois, leaving the northern boundary at forty-one degrees and thirty-seven minutes, the southern point of Lake Michigan, but immediately after he introduced this bill, Judge Pope, on his own responsibility, without instructions from Illinois, nor from any other source, himself made a motion that the Enabling Act which had been formulated in Illinois, be so amended as to move the northern boundary of Illinois to its present position.

It is seldom that any man is in a

position to render a great and valuable service to the people with whom he is connected, and it is not always the case, when one happens to be in such a position, that he realizes its importance and has the courage and enterprise to seize upon it. Judge Pope, at once, realized the importance to his own state, about to be organized and to this whole nation, of moving the boundary of Illinois to the North. No one in Illinois, nor elsewhere, realized the importance of such movement. The idea originated in the brain of this great man—he was in a position to carry it into execution and he did not hesitate. It may be justly said, that Judge Pope's interest in his own state, in the matter, was not paramount to his interest in the whole great nation. With a prescience that now seems wonderful, he realized the danger of secession and disruption of the union, which was attempted forty years later, and he argued that, situated as she was, with her hold through the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, upon the South and Southern commerce, if she could acquire a similar hold upon the North and East, upon New York and New England, Pennsylvania and Ohio, Illinois would be the most potential of any state of the union, in holding the states together. That so situated in the midst of the Republic her grasp upon the East and North, and upon the South, Illinois could never be shaken off—that the union could never be dissolved. He saw that if Illinois had only commerce with the South, as would have been the case, had she been limited to the river trade, she would have been inclined, should secession be attempted, to go with the South.

These arguments were made, in Congress, by Judge Pope, while the Enabling Act for Illinois was being considered, and carried the day. Long after that great statesman had passed away, his arguments were tested, in the midst of carnage and death, in the smoke of battle by brave Illinois heroes, some of them led by his own son, a major general in the United States army* and proved to be sound.

As may be supposed, the people of Wisconsin, as that region became occupied and after a Territory was or-

ganized, expressed their disapproval of a measure, which took from their State so much valuable Territory and gave it to Illinois.

In 1838, the Territorial Legislature, of Wisconsin, sent a memorial to Congress protesting against this change of boundary, claiming that, by the Ordinance of 1787, they were entitled to the region in dispute, and urging that it be restored to them. The Wisconsin Territorial Legislature of 1839, took similar action. Judge Doty, the Territorial Governor in 1841, was especially earnest and eloquent in urging the claims of Wisconsin.

Even in Illinois, in the disputed Territory, there were those who favored the claims of Wisconsin. There were meetings, in the disputed Territory, to advocate the claims of Wisconsin, culminating in a delegate convention at Rockford, in 1840, in which delegates, from nine counties of the disputed Territory, declared in favor of Wisconsin.

The controversy was finally and completely set at rest, forever, when, in 1848, Wisconsin accepted, as her Southern boundary, the line of forty-two degrees and thirty minutes, already adopted as the Northern boundary of Illinois, upon the motion of Judge Pope in Congress thirty years before.

It may be remarked, in passing, that Michigan had a similar controversy with Ohio. Her Southern boundary was, by the Ordinance of 1787, as she claimed, the same parallel as was that of Illinois, before moved to the north through the efforts of Judge Pope, a line running due East from the Southern point of Lake Michigan. She was obliged to relinquish much of Southern Territory but she was richly compensated by being granted the Northern Peninsula.

The People of the State of Illinois.

All laws of Illinois are made in the name of the people and must be introduced with the words "Be it enacted by the people of the State of Illinois." If not always carried out in practice, the theory is that everything emanates from the people. This being the case, no study is more interesting nor important, to Illinoisans, than that of the people. Pope's sphorism that,

* Major General John Pope.

"The Proper Study of Mankind, is Man."

is, with us, particularly worth following.

The people of the State of Illinois are, perhaps in a greater degree than those of any other state, drawn from those who dominate the earth.

They are made up from the best of the southern, the middle and the Northern States, and of Europe. Here, upon the prairies, the best blood of the earth co-mingles and is producing a race surpassing any the world has ever known. The men and women of the North are allying themselves with those of the South, and vice versa. A marriage is recalled, in which the groom is descended from the Cavaliers of Virginia, and the bride from the Puritans of New England. So far as possible to ascertain, the husband has no Puritan blood, and the wife no Cavalier blood. His ancestors were of Virginia, his grand parents migrated from Virginia to Kentucky, where his father and mother were born, and his father and mother migrated to Missouri, where he was born.

The grand parents of his wife were of New England and migrated to New York, where her father and mother were born, and her parents, in turn, moved to Illinois, where she was born.

Those who have come to Illinois naturally, have, in their bosoms, at first prejudice in a greater or less degree, in favor of the customs and people, among whom they were born, and against those of regions more remote. Here in Illinois, we learn that other regions produce men and women, equal and sometimes superior, to those with whom we are related, and it has a tendency to broaden us.

Illinois, when she became a state by her admission into the union, in 1818, had not so great a population as now have several of her counties, only 35,000.

Egypt.

This population was composed, mostly of people from the southern states, but there were many French who have made their impress, in a great degree, upon the state, and given it character. The population was mostly confined to the region since designated as Egypt. There were few people north of St. Louis, north of

the line of the Ohio and Mississippi Railway. It was not until twenty-five years later, that people migrated, in great numbers, to northern and central Illinois. When she became a state, northern Illinois was uninhabited, or occupied by savages. Finally, people came in to northern Illinois, from the northern and middle, and other states, and they were followed, in great numbers, by immigrants from northern and central Europe, English, Irish, Scandinavians, Germans and other races, who have assimilated with and become homogenous with native Americans, to such a degree, that the second generation can hardly be distinguished from those whose ancestors came over in the Mayflower, or with John Smith of Pocahontas fame.

The blood of men, whose ancestors fought under Gustavus, Adolphus and Marlborough, and Frederick the Great, and Oliver Cromwell and at the battle of The Boyne co-mingling, upon the prairies, with that of those who fought under George Washington, is producing a race of Illini worthy of the name.

Now are coming, from Italy and Greece, and all southern Europe, races whose influence cannot yet be estimated.

By the Ordinance of 1787, the vast region, comprising Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan, was dedicated to freedom. Slavery or involuntary servitude, was prohibited. Ohio was admitted into the Union, as a state, in 1803, Indiana in 1816, Illinois in 1818, Wisconsin in 1848, and Michigan in 1837.

The immense region in which Missouri is comprised, acquired by us in 1803, under the Louisiana Purchase, had no inhibition of slavery, and Missouri was admitted into the union as a slave state.

Constitutions of Illinois.

The State of Illinois has been governed under three constitutions—the first that of 1818, when the state was admitted into the Union—the second that of 1848, and the third, that of 1870, under which latter we are now living. Unsuccessful attempts have been made to adopt a new constitution, or amend the one existing, that of 1824 in order to establish slavery, and that of 1862 to change the administration of the state government.

The three constitutions of Illinois are within the reach of all and need not, now, be especially considered, except in regard to one or two matters.

The Constitution of 1818, contained, in its preamble, no recognition of the Deity. Such a recognition was urged, with great force and persistence, by several religious bodies, and quite a number of people, without success. The framers refused to accede to their demands. So intense was the feeling upon this matter, that religious bodies, notably the covenanters, refused to vote, as did individual members of other religious bodies. They claimed that that constitution, by so failing to recognize the existence of a God, virtually denied that there was a God. Both constitutions of Illinois since adopted, that of 1848 and that of 1870, recognize the Deity.

The Fight in Illinois Against Slavery.

But the time came when there was such a paramount issue, that nobody, including the covenanters, could be restrained from voting. Slaves were brought to Illinois, by individuals, from its earliest settlement, but human beings were never lawfully held in bondage within the limits of the state.

In 1820, only two years after Illinois was admitted as a free state, Missouri was admitted as a slave state.

The early emigration to Missouri, as was the case with Illinois, was from the south. The migration to Missouri, from Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Carolinas, was, much of it, through Illinois. The emigrants crossed the Ohio river at Cincinnati, Louisville, Shawneetown and other places, and after traversing Illinois, crossed the Mississippi into Missouri. Many of these emigrants to Missouri were slaveholders and wealthy. As they passed along the highways of Illinois, with their great trains, prairie schooner wagons, horses and mules, and other stock, household utensils, dogs and guns and slaves, naturally, they arrested the attention of the Illinois people and, naturally, the Illinois people wanted them to stop and settle among them, and so declared. Illinoisians urged upon these emigrants, that we had a better state than Missouri, that our lands were as good and as cheap as the lands in Missouri, and that we had natural

advantages superior to those of Missouri.

While generally admitting that the claims of the Illinois people, in regard to the excellencies of their state, were just, those opulent emigrants answered that they could not, in Illinois, "hold their property" (slaves), because slavery was not lawful in Illinois, and that, in order to hold their slaves, they must go on to Missouri, a slave state. The effect of this upon many Illinois people can better be imagined than described.

To see all this wealth and luxury pass by them, was a serious matter for those poor Illinois pioneers, in that sparsely settled country. The southern states were right at their doors. Nearly all of Illinois, that was then inhabited, bordered upon the south. The southern people were neighbors and kindred of the Illinois people, of the same stock and of the same ancestry. The trade relations, the commerce of Illinois people, were all with the south extending as far as New Orleans, which was their chief entrepot. Flatboatmen loaded their craft along the banks of the Mississippi, the Ohio, the Wabash and the Illinois Rivers and their tributaries with the produce and pelts and furs, and wool, and even with live-stock, which were floated into the great southern market of New Orleans. These Illinoisians, on their leisurely journey home, flush with money from the sale of their flatboats and cargoes, made friends with neighborhoods they passed, and it was not uncommon for an Illinois swain to bring home, with him, a fair southern belle as his bride.

The relations of Illinoisians, commercially and socially, with the southern people, could not have been closer. Slavery had been prohibited, in all the northwest territory, by the ordinance of 1787. But now, Illinois was no longer subject to that ordinance. She had become a sovereign state, as independent as was Virginia, or any other state, and upon an equality with every other state. She now had the same right and authority to establish slavery, as had Virginia or any other state.

The slavery question had not yet become a bitter burning sensational issue. The word 'abolitionist', which afterwards became odious, had scarcely been spoken.

Benjamin Lundy, "The first of our countrymen who devoted his life and all his powers, exclusively, to the cause of the slave," who awakened William Lloyd Garrison to the Holy cause, to which he devoted his life, Benjamin Lundy, whose sacred dust mingles with and enriches, in Putnam county, the soil of Illinois, had but just entered upon his life work. Slavery was regarded, in the neighboring states, as the natural normal condition of the negro. Black men were, really although unlawfully, held in bondage in Illinois. Why not establish the institution in our own state, by law, and stop this migration to Missouri, and keep these Lordly Plutocrats, with their wealth, to ourselves?

With such environments, such relations, and such captivating inducements, when all their interests seemed to be in that direction, how those good people of Illinois could have resisted the inducements held out to them, by the advocates of slavery, is beyond compare. That they did so hold out, proves them to belong to the Illini—to be "imbued with the spirit, fortitude, and heroism of all the men, of every race that ever existed."

To amend the constitution required, first, the vote of two thirds of each house of the legislature to call an election, and then the vote of a majority of the people in favor of it. The two-thirds majorities, of both houses of the legislature, were obtained, but not without some political manipulation, somewhat similar to what has been witnessed in more modern legislatures.

The proslavery men had the requisite two thirds in the senate, but lacked one vote of two thirds in the house. By a contest at the opening of the session, between two men, Nicholas Hansen and John Shaw, both claiming to have been elected in the remote county of Pike, after a thorough investigation, Hansen was declared elected and seated, Shaw gave up the contest and went home. Hansen was opposed to amending the constitution and it was learned that Shaw favored it. The proslavery men reconsidered the vote by which Hansen had been declared elected and seated, and admitted Shaw, who was quietly at home 150 miles away. Shaw was sent for and made a flying trip, on horseback, to the capitol and the proslavery men had their two

thirds majority. But still the question had to be submitted to the vote of the people.

Such a contest as was then waged in "Egypt," then all of Illinois, was scarcely ever hitherto known.

Edward Coles.

Edward Coles, a name that should be pronounced, by Illinois people with reverence for all time, was governor. He had been a Virginia slaveholder. When a young man but 24 years of age, he was made secretary to President James Madison. He was a cousin of the celebrated Dolly Madison, the wife of the president. His position with the president, brought him into relations with the statesmen of his time. He was, when a young man, a **protege** of Thomas Jefferson. He, like Jefferson, came to abhor human slavery. When he came to Illinois, he brought his slaves with him, and when descending the Ohio river, he called them together and set them free.

Edward Coles was the leader of, what at first seemed to be, but a handful, the anti-slavery men of Illinois. Their numbers augmented until they began to have hopes, faint at first, of success. Strong, able, conscientious men appeared to fight for freedom. Among these men, perhaps the strongest, next to the governor, were Reverend John M. Peck and Morrie Birbeck. A great champion of freedom was Henry Eddy of Shawneetown. Of the many others who took part, against a convention and in favor of freedom, were George Churchill, Hooper Warren, Jonathan H. Pugh, George Forquer, Daniel P. Cook, Thomas Lippincott and Thomas Mather.

The contest grew in intensity, until it became as acrimonious as were those between the proslavery men and abolitionists in the days just preceding the Civil War.

In recounting the history of that awful contest, Governor Reynolds, in his "My Own Times," says:

"Men, women and children entered the arena of party warfare and strife, and the families and neighborhoods were so divided and fierce, and bitter towards one another, that it seemed a regular Civil War might be the result—Many personal combats were indulged in, upon the question, and the whole country seemed, at times, to be ready and willing to resort to physical

force to decide the contest."

Governor Ford, in his "History of Illinois," says of that campaign:

"Newspapers, hand bills, and pamphlets were scattered everywhere, and everywhere they scorched and scathed as they flew. Almost every stump, in every county, had its bellowing, indignant orator, on one side or the other, and the whole people, for the space of months, did scarcely anything but read newspapers, hand bills, and pamphlets. Quarrel, wrangle, and argue with each other, whenever they met together to hear the violent harangues of their orators."

Another writer declares that "Even the gentler sex came within the vortex of this whirlwind of passion—and many were the angry disputations of those whose cares and interests were usually confined to their household duties."

Curiously, and it must be said, to their everlasting honor, many of those who so zealously and heroically fought to save the state to freedom, had migrated from the South. They had, in Virginia and Tennessee, and Kentucky and the Carolinas, like Governor Coles, seen and appreciated the evils of human slavery, and were willing to fight to the death, to save Illinois from them. In fact, many of those Southern people, had left their homes in the South, and come to Illinois, to get away from the blighting curse.

Illinois Saved to Freedom.

The fierce campaign continued for eighteen months—a year and a half. Entering into the contest, with little hope of success, the free state men made as gallant a fight, as any of which we have any record. The election was set for the first Monday of August, 1824. It actually occurred on the second of August. As the momentous day approached, the free state men were more and more hopeful, but they did not relax their efforts, until the polls were closed. They won, by such a majority as to set the question at rest forever. They had a majority of 1872 votes. The whole vote cast was 11,772.

It stood, against a convention to amend the constitution and permit slavery, 6,822; for such a convention, 4,950; majority for free state, 1,872.

Considering the number of votes, in all, only 11,772, the majority for freedom was remarkable. Can any one doubt the propriety of the people of the State being called "The Illini?"

Another Glorious Epoch.

There has been another epoch, in the history of Illinois, scarcely less glorious than the one we have attempted to describe.

The Craze for Internal Improvements.

In the year 1836, twelve years after she made her sublime record of dedicating the State to freedom, the people of Illinois, in their ambition to put the state forward, in development and prosperity, entered upon a system of internal improvements, which came near proving to be our ruin.

The legislature, of that year, was supplemented by an internal improvement convention, composed of some of the ablest men of the state. Two questions were paramount, that of embarking upon a vast system of internal improvement, and that of the removal of the state capitol from Vandalia to Springfield.

There was a coterie of men, who seemed to hold the legislature within their grasp, nine in number, all of unusual height—of whom Abraham Lincoln was one—known as "The Long Nine." These, all able men, held the balance of power in the legislature. They usually went together. They favored the movement for internal improvement, and also the removal of the state capitol to Springfield, both of which carried.

Then the money began to be poured out and times were good. Everything produced by the farmers commanded a good price. There was so much money and such good times, that the people became generous and even lavish in their expenditures.

It was expected, that most of the money would be expended in the improvement of waterways, and money was raised for that purpose. Such counties as had no navigable streams, but had paid, had the money paid back to them, as was the case with Knox County.

But a large sum was to be devoted to the building of railroads. The system of internal improvements provided for the building, at once, of 1,342 miles of railway, at a cost of over nine million dollars.

Hardest Times Ever Known in Illinois.

Before the people began to realize that there was any danger, they awoke to find that the state was in debt more than twelve millions of dollars, and bankrupt. The system of extravagance was repealed, but not until the state was unable to pay the interest on its bonds, and the credit of the state became a bye-word all over the commercial world. Finally, the people were driven almost to the extremity of repudiation. A period of depression and stagnation continued from 1839 to 1857.

In 1840, four years after the inauguration of this wild policy of internal improvement began, the population of the whole state was only 476,183. A half dozen of our 102 counties, not including Cook, now have more population than did the whole state then.

The property value of the state was little in proportion to population. The people finally woke up to find that the state owed, in proportion to population and property, far more than one hundred millions would be now.

The people of the state were nearly all farmers. They had, in produce of their farms, plenty, but it would bring nothing. Corn 8 and 10 cents a bushel wheat, 40 cents; pork, 2 and 3 cents a pound; a fat steer from 5 to 10 dollars; eggs, 3 cents a dozen.

In speaking of those times, a member of the constitutional convention in 1870, said.

"It was a glorious time for two or three years, but after the money ran through and was all gone, and pay day come, the people had to pass through an ordeal, such as no community, perhaps on this continent, ever went through before. It lasted twenty years; it paralyzed industry, it drove emigrants from the state, it reduced communities to pauperism.

"Then a party arose that proposed repudiation. There were localities where the payment of taxes was refused. In others, a compromise with creditors—another name for repudiation—was proposed. The question of payment was considered a very dangerous one. Both political parties evaded it. It was said, 'We can't pay the debt.' 'We might as well say so. It will take all our property, all we can raise—all our farms and stock—

everything. It is ruin. Let us tell our creditors, frankly, that we cannot meet this enormous debt and that in order to get anything they must compromise."

But there were brave men in those days. There were "Illini" men imbued with the spirit, fortitude and heroism of all the men of every race that ever lived."

They would not hear to repudiation. They would not listen to compromise. They declared that they would not live in a state that repudiated. They would not live in a state that would ask a creditor to compromise one dollar of a lawful claim against them. They said: "We will mortgage everything, pledge everything, give up everything to our creditors—and lest we, ourselves, shall faint by the way, we will place ourselves in a position where we, ourselves, cannot avoid it. We will make a new fundamental law binding upon every inhabitant of the state for all time." And so the constitution of 1848 was formulated and adopted.

That constitution provided for a tax of two mills, on every dollar of property, to be applied entirely to the payment of the debt. Two mills on a dollar, one-fifth of one per cent., seemed to be but a small amount, but it was sufficient to show the American people, and to show the world, that the people of Illinois stood up to their obligations. The result was, that first hundreds, then thousands, then hundreds of thousands, from the east, the middle States, the South, and from Europe, flocked to the prairies. Between 1850 and 1860, twelve years after the two mill tax was assumed, the population more than doubled. In 1850, it was 851,270. In 1860, it was 1,704,290. The two mill tax was collected until 1870, and at that time, the population had, since it was adopted, increased threefold. It had reached the enormous number of 2,529,891 souls. Before we knew it, the entire State debt was paid and wiped out and the credit of no other state, in the Union, was, and is better.

The Two Mill Tax.

The two mill tax was a matter of such vast importance and resulted in such beneficence, to the people of Illinois, that we are constrained to give Article 15, of the Constitution of 1848, in full,

ARTICLE 15.

"There shall be annually assessed and collected, in the same manner as other state revenue may be assessed and collected, a tax of two mills on each dollar's worth of taxable property, in addition to all other taxes, to be applied as follows, to-wit: The fund so created shall be kept separate, and shall annually, on the first day of January, be apportioned and paid over *pro rata*, upon all such indebtedness, other than the canal and school indebtedness, as may, for that purpose, be presented by the holders of the same, to be entered as credits upon and to that intent, in extinguishment of the principal of said indebtedness."

The War With Mexico.

It would be gratifying, if we had the time, to tell of the splendors of the achievements of Illinois soldiers in the war with Mexico. There are few chapters in American history more thrilling than those giving accounts of the deeds of American soldiers in that war. None were more brave and gallant than were the men of Illinois.

There were never more brave and efficient officers than were Bissell, Hardin, Shields and Baker.

The Mexican war proved to be of advantage to officers of the Civil war, as a school of training, of whom Generals Grant and Logan were conspicuous examples. There are four hundred Mexican war veterans now living in Illinois, but they are so old and feeble that only eighteen were able to attend their last reunion.

The Civil War.

But the most important epoch in the history of Illinois was that of the Civil war. She sent to the field 267,057 volunteers in proportion to population, more than any other state. They were, besides those on special duty, divided up into 175 regiments, 156 of infantry, 17 of cavalry and 2 of artillery. She lost 5,874, killed in battle, and 22,786 by disease.

The prediction of Judge Pope proved to be more than true. Through her relations with the North and South, Illinois held both in her inexorable grasp. As population increased, her hold upon both sections became more firm.

Upon the first demonstration of hostility to the government, she, at once, acted and the importance of her position became apparent. Almost

immediately after the firing on Fort Sumpter, in the darkness of night, the shrill whistle of a locomotive was heard from a train of cars on the Illinois Central Railway, sent out by the mightiest war governor, and the most alert the country ever produced, Richard Yates, under the command of General Swift, bearing men and munitions of war, and the people awoke in the morning, to find that the most important strategic point in the Continent, was occupied by Illinois troops, never to be given up. Northern Illinois, at Chicago, and now Southern Illinois at Cairo, reached out, the one to the North and the other to the South, grasping each section in a grip that could not be shaken off, from that hour, and was never relaxed, except to get a stronger and firmer and better hold, extending the advance of United States volunteers from this vantage ground clear down the Mississippi, taking in and restoring to the Union, the Southwestern States.

From Belmont to Appamatox, there was not a battlefield upon which Illinois soldiers were not, fighting for the Union, conspicuous.

Her statesmen and officers, in those dark days, were among the best and wisest and noblest of men. She gave, to the land, Stephen A. Douglas, a statesman whose clarion voice when the war burst forth, awakened the people to their duty and united men, of all parties, in one common purpose to save their country. She produced John A. Logan, the greatest volunteer-soldier.

She finally, after several others failed, gave to the country General Ulysses S. Grant who, when directing a million of men, was capable of making every one useful and helpful, in bringing about the grand result. And above all, Illinois placed over the army and navy and over all the people, Abraham Lincoln, the greatest, wisest and most considerate of men of all the ages, who led us to victory.

Lincoln, Douglas, Grant and Logan! What other commonwealth can number among her immortals such great names? Such as these can scarcely be found in the realms of fancy. In the epics of Homer, such a galaxy does not

appear. If one ascends the heights of Olympus and contemplates the Divinities in the sublimity and glory with which mythology endows them, he will search in vain for attributes so sublime and character so majestic. Had Illinois only given these four to the nation, she would have been distinguished as is no other commonwealth among the sisterhood of states. Yet were Lincoln and Douglas and Grant and Logan not numbered among those sent forth from the prairies, there would still appear in the firmament of American glory a constellation of Illinois statesmen and heroes that would illumine the world.

The temple of which the states of the American Union form the integral parts is the most sublime that was ever reared. Its foundations are laid in principles more substantial and en-

during than granite; while the superstructure embodies and amplifies, in sublimity and beneficence, the wisdom and hopes and aspirations of all the ages.

In the midst of this mighty structure, exalted to lofty eminence, supported and dependent upon all the other states, uniting and giving strength and grace and beauty to the whole, so conspicuous through the achievements of her sons that all the people instinctively turn their eyes toward her, rises Illinois, whose splendors and glories illumine every part of the mighty edifice which she majestically canopies.

New York is justly called the Empire State, and Pennsylvania the Keystone State. Illinois must be recognized as the **stately Dome** of the American Republic.

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